

Focus on why climate change is a union issue

PCS has long asserted that climate change is a trade union issue and that workers need to be at the forefront of solutions required to transition to a fully de-carbonised economy. This is because no matter the work you do, workplaces are a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and accelerating climate change.

Our union has a proud history of campaigning on environmental and climate issues in wider society and at the workplace level through our network of green reps. In 2019, our national executive (NEC) declared a climate emergency on behalf of members as instructed by conference motion A312. This was not a symbolic gesture but a means to put practical demands on our employers to address sustainability issues and, in the civil service, ensure the government walks its own talk on climate.

But we have always been clear, addressing climate change means addressing the inherent inequality and imbalance of power in the economic and political system. Therefore, climate change is also an issue of economic and social justice.

Along with the wider trade union movement, PCS calls for a [Just Transition](#), a term developed by unions to ensure workers and communities are protected through processes of change in addressing the climate crisis, and do not suffer as we saw during the years of de-industrialisation. This means social protections for incomes and pensions, investment in retraining and skills, and engagement with workers representatives.

Pro-public approach

For PCS, we have always been clear however that any transition also must be transformative, and therefore must be more than arguing for 'green' jobs in the same neo-liberal economy that has been driving down wages and attacking pensions, creating precarious work, outsourcing, and privatising public services. PCS calls for a pro-public approach and public ownership of things such as energy, water, transport, health and social care, education.

Our members have a vital role to play in this through the work of:

- collecting taxes to finance the transition
- delivering social protections, such as living wage benefits and supporting workers into new green jobs
- developing climate policy and new forms of governance for public ownership of energy
- looking after green spaces and public facilities such as in the Royal Parks
- getting the polluters funding out of museums and galleries
- fighting for workers' rights in the workplace against the anti-trade union laws, or on the streets.

In November, world leaders will meet in Glasgow to assess progress on acting on climate change. The COP26 coalition, of which PCS is a member, is organising simultaneous protests on 6 November in Glasgow and London, as well as other cities across the UK including in Wales and Northern Ireland. We are calling on all members to join the protests – in Covid safe ways – and get involved beyond.

Find out more about the [COP26 coalition](#) and protests.

For more information and resources from PCS email green@pcs.org.uk

Let us know how you are organising against climate change where you live and work. Email editor@pcs.org.uk

[Read guides to bargaining and campaigning on climate and environmental issues](#)

- [Trades Union Congress](#)
- [Scottish TUC](#)
- [Wales TUC Cymru](#)
- [Trade Unions for Energy Democracy](#)
- [Campaign Against Climate Change trade union group](#) (CACCTU)

For further information and to request PCS resources contact green@pcs.org.uk

[Read Green rep Charlotte explain how her branch is build towards 6 November](#)

[Read Charlotte's article for Activate](#)

[Read DWP rep Paul's blog about why we must fight for green jobs](#)

[Read Paul's blog](#)

[Rep Bridget explains why must PCS be involved in the fight for climate justice](#)

[Read Bridget's blog](#)

[Stuart Melvin of COP26 Coalition urges members to get involved](#)

[Find out how in Stuart's blog](#)

[South West members say tackling climate crisis is linked to tackling economic inequality](#)

[Read their article](#)